

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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SUBJECT: DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE

REF: NAIROBI 10621

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INFORMAL CANADIAN PROPOSAL ON
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS MENTIONED PARA 3 REFTEL:

"1. RECOMMENDATION 19 OF THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION
(A/CONF. 74/3) SUGGESTS THAT THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
COORDINATION BOARD (ECB) SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING
UP AND COORDINATING IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN OF ACTION.

2. PARAGRAPH 77 OF THE PLAN STATES THAT NEW INSTITUTION
IN UN SYSTEM IS NOT NEEDED TO CARRY OUT IMPLEMENTATION OF
PLAN. CANADA AGREES WITH THIS ASSESSMENT BUT IS DOUBTFUL
THAT ECB IS BEST QUALIFIED TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK.

ECB WAS CREATED WITH SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF ENSURING MOST
EFFICIENT COORDINATION OF U.N. ENVIRONMENTAL INTERESTS.

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HOWEVER, THE PROGRAMME SET OUT IN DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION IS
CONCERNED WITH MUCH MORE THAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES.
SECONDLY, GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM OF DESERTIFI-
CATION, IT WOULD SEEM TO MERIT MORE SPECIAL ATTENTION
THAN MAY BE POSSIBLE IN A BODY CONCERNED WITH SUCH A
BROAD RANGE OF PROBLEMS AS IS ECB. THUS, WHILE DESERT-
IFICATION PROBLEM MAY NOT MERIT NEW INSTITUTION, IT MAY

REQUIRE NEW COORDINATING BODY. IT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE THAT THIS BE UNDER AUSPICES OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION (ACC).

3. IN THIS RESPECT, CANADA CONSIDERS IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO KEEP IN MIND THE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN MADE FOR COORDINATION OF UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES RELATING TO NUTRITION. THE PROBLEM OF MALNUTRITION IS FAIRLY SPECIFIC IN ITS EFFECT, YET QUITE WIDESPREAD IN ITS IMPACT. IT INVOLVES SEVERAL UN INSTITUTIONS AND WAS THOUGHT TO REQUIRE A PANEL OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS TO PROVIDE ADVICE. ALL THIS WOULD APPEAR TRUE OF DESERTIFICATION AS WELL.

4. ECOSOC AT ITS 63RD SESSION AGREED TO ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ACC SUB-COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION, ON WHICH THE FIVE OR SIX ORGANIZATIONS MOST CONCERNED ARE REPRESENTED BY SENIOR OFFICERS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION ON NUTRITION. THE SUB-COMMITTEE WILL SERVE AS A FOCUS FOR HARMONIZING POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES ON UN SYSTEM, FOR APPRAISING EXPERIENCE AND PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES AND FOR LAYING DOWN GUIDELINES FOR MUTUALLY SUPPORTING ACTION AT BOTH GLOBAL AND COUNTRY LEVELS. A SIMILAR SUB-COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPING AND HARMONIZING CONCEPTS, POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE AREA OF DESERTIFICATION APPEARS TO CANADA TO BE SUITABLE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EFFECTIVE ARRANGEMENT.

4. THE DESERTIFICATION SUB-COMMITTEE COULD BE SERVICED BY SMALL SECRETARIAT ADMINISTERED BY ONE OF AGENCIES OF SUB-COMMITTEE. COST OF SECRETARIAT WOULD BE MET FROM SMALL BUDGET FINANCED BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ONE OR MORE OF SPONSORING AGENCIES.

6. THE NEED FOR OUTSIDE TECHNICAL ADVICE ON NUTRITION HAS BEEN MET BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ADVISORY GROUP ON NUTRITION. THE ADVISORY GROUP WOULD HAVE MEMBERSHIP OF FIVE OR SIX, WITH PANEL OF ALTERNATES, AND WOULD FUNCTION IN FLEXIBLE MANNER, RESPONDING TO REQUESTS FOR ADVICE FROM ACC SUB-COMMITTEE OR FROM SPONSORING AGENCIES. ADVISORY GROUP WOULD BE SUPPORTED BY SUB-COMMITTEE'S SECRETARIAT AND ITS WORK PROGRAMME WOULD BE ESTABLISHED BY SUB-COMMITTEE. THIS CONCEPT COULD QUITE EASILY BE ADAPTED TO BE IN HARMONY WITH PROPOSAL IN THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION (RECOMMENDATION 20) THAT A TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL-/COMMITTEE/GROUP ON DESERTIFICATION BE ESTABLISHED TO ADVISE THE BODY COORDINATING THE UN'S ANTI-DESERTIFICATION EFFORTS.

7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ON THIS MATTER WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH ECOSOC, TO WHICH DESERTIFICATION SUB-COMMITTEE WOULD REPORT ANNUALLY THROUGH ACC. MOREOVER, RESULTS OF WORK OF SUB-COMMITTEE, BETWEEN REPORTS TO ECOSOC, WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO GOVERNMENTS.

8. FINALLY, IT MUST BE KEPT IN MIND THAT NEITHER DESERTIFICATION SUB-COMMITTEE NOR ADVISORY COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/ GROUP WOULD HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO ANY FUNDS. FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES WOULD CONTINUE TO COME FROM DEVELOPMENT BANKS, BILATERAL AID, VOLUNTARY FUNDS SUCH AS UNDP AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, BUDGETS OF INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES AND ENVIRONMENT FUND." LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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2. CANADIAN FOCAL POINT INFORMED PERMREP AUGUST 19 THAT BRITISH COLLEAGUE, WHO WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND AGUSUT 18 MEETING, HAD RECEIVED VERY SIMILAR PROPOSAL FOR ACC SUBCOMMITTEE FROM LONDON. LE MELLE

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